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REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. All pending claims are found at pages 2-8. Claims 1, 14, 27, and 37 have been amended herein.

Applicants' representative would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview on January 13, 2004 related to the Office Action dated December 11, 2003. Independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 37 have been amended per Examiner's suggestions and are now, along with their dependent claims, believed to be in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and comments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 1-5, 11, 14-15, 18-20, 24, 27-28, 30-32, 35, 37-38, and 45 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-5, 11, 14-15, 18-20, 24, 27-28, 30-32, 35, 37-38, and 45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Bloomfield (U.S. 6,370,552).

Applicants' representative respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn in light of the amendments made to independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 37. The Examiner has agreed during the interview that Bloomfield does not disclose or suggest each and every element recited in amended independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 37 (and claims 2-5, 11, 15, 18-20, 24, 28, 30-32, 35, 38, and 45 which depend there from). Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

II. Rejection of Claims 6 and 21 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 6 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomfield in view of Guedalia (U.S. Patent #6,356,283). For the reasons stated in Section I of this reply, Bloomfield does *not* anticipate independent claims 1 and 27 and, therefore, the addition of Guedalia does *not* make their dependent claims 6 and 21, respectively, obvious. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

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III. Rejection of Claims 7-9, 13, 16-17, 22, 26, 29, 33, 36, 39-43, and 46**Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Claims 7-9, 13, 16-17, 22, 26, 29, 33, 36, 39-43, and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomfield in view of Cordell (U.S. 6,031,989). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested for at least the following reasons. The subject claims respectively depend from independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 37. As noted in Section I of this reply, Bloomfield does not teach or suggest applicants' invention as recited in these independent claims; and Cordell does make up for the noted deficiencies of Bloomfield. Therefore, the combination of Bloomfield and Cordell does not make obvious applicants' invention as recited in the subject claims. This rejection should be withdrawn.

IV. Rejection of Claims 10, 23, 34, and 44 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 10, 23, 34, and 44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomfield in view of Cordell in view of Anderson (U.S. 6,363,398). These claims respectively depend from independent claims 1, 14, 27, and 37. Anderson does not make up for the deficiencies of Bloomfield and Cordell – this rejection should be withdrawn.

V. Rejection of Claims 12 and 25 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 12 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomfield in view of Anderson. For the reasons stated in Section I, Bloomfield does *not* anticipate independent claims 1 and 14 and, therefore, the addition of Anderson does not make their dependent claims 12 and 25 obvious. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

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VI. CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above amendments and comments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063.

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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